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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: REPUBLICAN ELECTION LOSS

On November 11, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record "El Mercurio" (circ. 129,000) ran an editorial entitled "Bush Defeated."
Quote:

"President Bush and the Republic Party have suffered a significant defeat. The outcome...is attributed to an array of elements that over the past year have hurt the popularity of the Republican administration. One of them was the disaffection of the Hispanic vote over the fence along the border with Mexico.... Another was the management of the conduct of the war in Iraq, perceived by many as inept and short-sighted.... The U.S. election extends beyond the country. Few believe there will be a radical change in domestic or international policy...or an immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq. The necessary negotiations between Republicans and Democrats could cause a lack of initiative in U.S. policy, with the subsequent cost for the rest of the world."

On November 8, conservative, afternoon "La Segunda" (circ. 33,000) ran an editorial entitled "Iraq and the Hispanic Vote in this election."

"There is no doubt that the key of the election results was the growing opposition to the way the White House has managed the occupation in Iraq. There is the feeling that it will turn into a blind alley similar to what happened with Vietnam, and which left an open wound among Americans.... Another key element was the Hispanic vote that turned strongly in favor of the Democrats.... As for Chile, the large issues in its relations with the United States have been resolved.... Our diplomacy, however, should increase its contacts with the U.S. Congress to forestall protectionist attitudes, because Democrats are more prone to this.... However, a House ruled by the Democrats is ideologically more consistent with the Concertacion, and President Bachelet is more in tune with the new speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi."

On November 9, conservative, independent "La Tercera" (circ. 101,000) ran an editorial entitled "The US Election and the War in Iraq." Quote:

"By removing Secretary Rumsfeld, President Bush...has shown political skill, because the former was becoming a burden for his administration.... It is also clear that voters expect a change in Iraq beyond the change of the Secretary...and that the results should force Washington to reconsider its strategy.... Tuesday's election could be the prelude of a Democratic Party victory for the 2008 presidential election. This creates some uncertainty regarding Iraq, because Tuesday's election was more a rejection of Bush than a reflection of support for the Democrats who, beyond harshly criticizing Bush, have not presented concrete alternative proposals.... The Republican electoral defeat therefore has confirmed that voters are not satisfied with the war in Iraq but...creates uncertainty on the future strategy of the United States in this conflict."

On November 9, government-owned, editorially independent "La Nacion", (circ. 4,200) ran an editorial entitled, "The Decline of the Hawks." Quote:

"Donald Rumsfeld's exit from the Pentagon marks the beginning of the

fall of the hawks that, for six years, have occupied the main offices of the U.S. government. Not only the Democrats in the U.S. can breath today more easily. In the world there is also a sense of relief.... Bush and his ideologues had gone too far. The rampant arrogance installed in the White House did not leave anyone indifferent; international organizations have suffered once and again.... The 'war on terrorism' was a blanket to cover the installation of fanatics to lead the world's main democracy.... Bush has trampled over the dignity of millions of men and women and Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz have joined McCarthy and McNamara in the gallery of shame.... Thanks to the voters who realized that it was about time to restore decency in 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue."

KELLY